

## Improving Appropriate Use of MRI for Lumbar Spine Imaging

Change Effective: November 23, 2020

### Background Information:

Lower back pain is very common and 50-90% of people will experience lower back pain at some time in their lives and is a common reason for visits to primary care. However, in the absence of red-flag symptoms, MRI is not recommended for lower back pain. Most other Canadian Provinces have implemented companion forms to assess the appropriateness of lumbar spine MRI imaging based on standard indicators. Boundary Trails Health Centre has decreased ordering of these tests by 56% in two participating clinics that worked on a pilot project for this work in Manitoba. This companion form (to an MRI Request for Consultation) can help assess the appropriateness of low back imaging and has created appointment spaces for other imaging that provides more diagnostic value. **This process will not be applicable to inpatient, emergency department or pediatric (patients under 17 years of age) settings.**

### Project Information:

Shared Health Diagnostics Services (Diagnostic Imaging) has undertaken a Choosing Wisely Initiative to improve the appropriateness of MRI exams for lumbar spine across Manitoba. This quality improvement project has developed a tool to assess a patient's appropriateness for a Lumbar Spine MRI and works as a decision support tool for the clinician and patient together. It provides evidence based clinical decision support based on indications endorsed by the Canadian Spine Society, Canadian Association of Radiology, the College of Family Physicians of Canada, and others.

### The purpose of this project is to:

- Reduce wait times for patients who require diagnostic MRI imaging.
- Provide detailed clinical information for radiologists
- Provide a decision support tool that clinicians can review with patients to make partnered decisions on their care

**All new requests for lumbar spine imaging after November 23 must include a completed Lumbar Spine MRI Screening Tool and the MRI Request Form.**

The standardized MRI requisition form has been sent to the provincially certified EMR Vendors. They have been asked to create this as a two-page request for **Lumbar Spine MRI**; Page 1- Companion Form and Page 2- MRI Request Form. When ordering Lumbar Spine MRI, you will only need to open one file. All non-emergent requests should be forwarded to the Central Intake office at 204-926-3650 or 1-866-210-6119 (toll-free). All other MRI Requests only require the MRI Request for Consultation Form. **Do not delete** the current Provincial MRI requisition already in your EMR. Contact your EMR vendor for assistance to locate the **Lumbar Spine MRI** form. Please discuss the above changes with your staff.

### References/Resources/Training Video:

<https://sharedhealthmb.ca/health-providers/diagnostic-services/reference-material/lumbar-spine-mri/>

<https://youtu.be/KzwdZRO9Do4>

<https://choosingwiselycanada.org>

### Patient Impact:

- Positive patient impacts will include shorter wait times for MRI appointments and patient information tools / treatment alternatives.

### System Improvements:

- Improvement to our health system will be improved appropriateness of MRI's and clinical tools that support patients and care providers.

### Contact Information:

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